

**Minutes of Parents in Partnership Meeting
Community Room, Sunnymede Junior School
Friday 11th March 2016**

Present:	Name	Role	Class
	Ronnie Branch	Headteacher	
	Gail Oliver	PA to Headteacher	
	Lucy Moffat	Parent Representative	3K
	Ruth Coppell	Parent Representative	3M
	Angela Chapman	Parent Representative	4H
	Kerry Vickers	Parent Representative	4B
	Suzanne Kelly	Parent Representative	5C
	Leah Rogers	Parent Representative	5T
	Amanda Freestone	Parent Representative	6M
	Lan Lan Kam	Parent Representative	6M
	Kate Smith	Parent Representative	6B

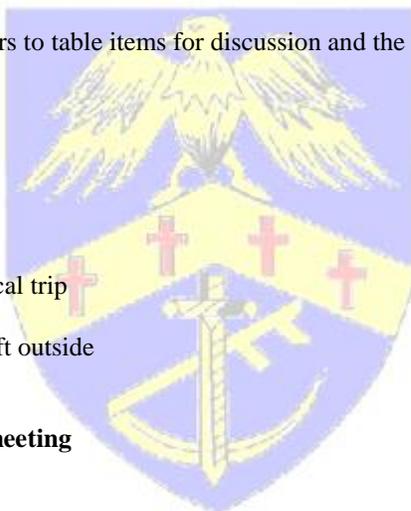
1. Welcome and apologies

Mrs Branch welcomed members to the meeting and apologies were received from Mrs Dacey.

2. Any Other Business

Mrs Branch invited members to table items for discussion and the following matters were advised:

Soap in the toilets
Homework
World Book Day
500 Words Project
Housing Proposal
Mons Avenue Gate
French
Drinks on a school walk/local trip
Menu – Fish fingers
Cardigans/jumpers/coats left outside
Parents Evening



3. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes were agreed.

4. Actions since the last meeting

Mrs Branch confirmed that the barrier in Mons Avenue has now been put up. There have been a few comments about the width of the path now that the barrier is erected. A member stated that the path width needs to be 1.2 metres to comply with disability access and the width has been measured at 1.44 metres so there is more than sufficient room for prams, pushchairs and wheelchairs. Mrs Branch congratulated the PIP on their successful campaigning for the barrier and thanked Mrs Oliver for liaising with the council.

There does, however, remain a problem with inconsiderate parking both in Mons Avenue and The Meadoway. Parents are parking on the zig zag lines and in the bus stop and also blocking neighbours' driveways. Mrs Branch confirmed that we have received letters from concerned neighbours regarding this issue and that letters of apology have been written. Mrs Branch also stated that she has taken chocolates around to some of the neighbours following an incident during the last school disco when an Infant parent totally blocked the junior gates and neighbouring driveways for over half an hour. We, as a school, have no powers to move vehicles on the public highway but if we can identify any of the parents we do speak to them. We send Parentmails reminding parents to park considerately as this is affecting the reputation of the school from a local community perspective.

5. E-Safety Policy

We are about to introduce a new e-safety policy based on the Essex County Council model policy. PIP members were asked to read the "acceptable use agreement" before discussion.

There are two agreements within the policy; one for pupils and one for staff, governors and visitors to agree and sign. Members were in agreement that it is the parents' responsibility to monitor their

child's use of electronic devices and social network sites outside of school. However, the school does get involved when "cyber bullying" takes place and is required to do so. With regard to the pupil agreement, members suggested, and it was agreed, that an additional bullet point should be added reminding children of their digital footprint being available and public forever and that they have no control over who sees this information. Members also discussed the inclusion of the word "unless" with regard to the bullet point concerning meeting someone. It was felt that a change of wording may be better e.g. "without the permission of a trusted adult". It was generally agreed that the agreements are good but need some editing. A lengthy discussion took place about IT provision and Mrs Branch explained at length about the developments in IT within the school, including a more flexible area for ICT, rather than a traditional ICT suite.

6. Lost Property left outside

A concern was raised regarding the number of coats and cardigans left outside on the playground and railings at the end of the day. Some of these items are still there the following morning and it was felt that this reflects poorly on the image of the school. Mrs Branch assured members that she will remind the Year 6 monitors of their duty to collect lost property from the playground after break and lunch time and that she will speak to Mr Evans concerning any items left at the end of the school day.

7. Playground

The condition of the playground markings was raised. Mrs Branch explained that the school has money to have football pitch / activity markings etc. on the playground but she was unwilling to do this until the playground is fully re-surfaced, which Mrs Branch stated needs doing. She explained, however, that the re-surfacing of the playground is the responsibility of Essex County Council who will fund the majority of the project but they have a priority waiting list. Mrs Branch has requested ECC to prioritise this as one of their projects but is still waiting for a response as to whether they will do it this year following their annual review. Mrs Branch assured parents that we are keen to get this work done so will continue to press ECC for a decision. Members asked whether lobbying the council with personal letters from parents would help given that the surface is becoming more uneven and a potential risk. Mrs Branch agreed that any assistance might be helpful but she would like any parent considering this to liaise with her first.

8. Fish Fingers

There was a question from a parent regarding the lunch menu on a Friday as it appears that fish fingers are available on Friday in week 1 and week 2. Mrs Branch advised that we are guided by county menus and fish on a Friday is part of their menus and a well-established tradition in schools. Our kitchen team monitor the uptake and wastage and adjust menus accordingly. We did offer a piece of fish as an alternative but the children did not appear to like this as much as fish fingers. It was agreed that the fish fingers were of good quality and substantial in size. Our menus will be changing soon after Easter and the school will take this into consideration when planning the choices available, although cannot guarantee a change.

9. Housing Development

A parent introduced a leaflet published by the Billericay Action Group regarding the proposed housing development. Mrs Branch stated that the local Headteachers are aware of the implications regarding admissions and this is on the agenda for their next meeting BCT Management Board meeting. There are concerns that there may be insufficient infrastructure in place and that competition for school places will increase. Discussions will be on-going amongst the agencies involved to establish the best possible outcomes.

10. Mons Avenue Gate

A question was raised about what happens when unaccompanied children arrive late to school and are unable to access via the Mons Avenue entrance as the gate is locked. Mrs Branch stated that we, as a school, have a responsibility to safeguard the whole school which is why the gate is locked throughout the school day. Mrs Branch reiterated the fact that children should not be late for school and, if the gates are left unlocked, this does not encourage prompt arrival. However, the main purpose for locking them is safeguarding of all the pupils who have arrived at school on time. We have taken the issue of safeguarding very seriously and installed security gates at the main entrance, therefore it would be counter-productive to leave the Mons Avenue gate unlocked. Mrs Branch asked parents to advise the school of any particular children this affects so that we, as a school, can support the child and the family. However, this should be for time-limited exceptional circumstances and not due to general

time management issues within families. Indeed, we are already doing this for a particular family where there are currently extenuating circumstances. General lateness is disruptive to the majority of the children who arrive on time for lessons.

11. School Trips

A member observed that when she accompanied Year 6 on a recent walk to Billericay, a number of the children became very thirsty and requested that children are reminded to take water bottles on trips out of school. Mrs Branch re-assured members that children are reminded to take a drink on trips both in the initial letter and on the day. However, she will remind the teachers again to remind pupils to take their water bottles. However, following a reminder from their teacher, it will then be the child's responsibility to take it, part of their developing independence.

12. 500 Words Homework

Concerns were raised over the inconsistency of the homework set for the 500 words writing competition recently. Some year groups found the task quite challenging and were given little guidance whereas other year groups were given greater support and time to complete the work in class. In general it was felt that the Y3 homework was more challenging than that set for Y4. Parents requested that there be more support given to the younger children and greater consistency across the year groups for any future projects.

13. Maths Homework

There was a question regarding maths homework as it seems that there has been a greater emphasis on literacy recently. Mrs Bicheno did note this from the feedback following the maths workshops and staff will be reminded of the need to set maths homework (other than Mathematics) a little more regularly.

14. World Book Day

Members felt that there had been some confusion regarding the onesie option for World Book Day. Some children do not possess a onesie and it was not clear whether they could wear pyjamas as an alternative. Mrs Branch explained that we offered the low key option of a onesie to avoid the need for parents to obtain costumes. This was really appreciated and it was agreed that where the question was raised regarding pyjamas, a positive answer was given. Many children wore pyjamas, as did some of the staff and a good day was enjoyed by all involved. The school will endeavour to clarify this from the outset for similar events in the future.

15. Soap

There was a concern regarding the lack of soap available in the lower school toilets. Mrs Branch will speak to Mr Evans.

16. Homework

Year 3 parents are concerned that they are not seeing any homework or spelling books regularly. Worksheets are sent home and lists of words to learn are provided but no feedback via their books is forthcoming. Mrs Branch will speak to the Year 3 teaching staff and feedback at the next PIP meeting.

17. French

It has been noticed that the children have not been receiving French lessons this term. Mrs Attridge is currently doing her teaching practice which will enable her to qualify to teach all subjects across the curriculum. Therefore we have not had French this term. A parent suggested that it may have been helpful to know this and perhaps a Parentmail should have been sent out. Mrs Branch explained that we can often 'block' subjects as a way of managing the curriculum and it would not be feasible to advise parents every time we do this. This is likely to happen more often as we evolve the new curriculum over time. Mrs Branch also reassured parents that in all other terms the children have had a dedicated hour of French every week, more than many schools and with high quality teaching, so they have not missed out on their French in any way. Mrs Branch advised that the children have been engaged in an SMSC project with Mrs Pye this term and that French will recommence after Easter.

18. Behaviour Policy

Following on from the last meeting where the issue of children standing on the steps was discussed; Mrs Branch advised the PIP that she has recently attended a course regarding de-escalation strategies. This training will be delivered to all staff in September. There are arguments both for and against the

step sanction and some parents like it and others don't. It does seem to work as a "one-off" deterrent but there are children who consistently receive the same sanction for low-level behaviour so there is a question whether this is an effective strategy. With Ofsted and the DFE pressurising regarding sanctions for poor behaviour, the senior leadership team have discussed an alternative where the children will be kept in the school hall and have a "circle / talk time" to discuss their behaviour e.g. what and why and how they can improve this. Names will be called out at the end of assembly so these children will still be highlighted but not in the same way as previously. The members were generally in agreement that this is a good alternative. We will trial this after Easter on Tuesday-Friday break times and advise parents via Parentmail or the Sunnymede Snippets newsletter. If, as a school, we consider this to be a more effective model, we will change the behaviour policy from September.

19. One parent noted how impressed they had been at the recent parent consultation meetings. They noted the quality of marking in books and how well-balanced they were in terms of praising pupils and also suggesting improvements. They noted how much effort teachers must put in to achieve this. Other members of the group acknowledged this to be the case also. Mrs Branch said she would feed this back to the teachers.

The date of the next meeting is Friday 27th May 2016 at 9:00am

